

INVESTIGATION OF  
THE PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

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INTERIM REPORT BY  
PREPAREDNESS INVESTIGATING  
SUBCOMMITTEE

Of The  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
UNITED STATES SENATE

Under the Authority of

S. Res. 75

(88th Cong., 1st Sess.)

On  
THE CUBAN MILITARY BUILDUP

FOR RELEASE 12:00 NOON  
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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

U. S. Senate,  
Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee,  
Committee on Armed Services,  
May , 1963.

Honorable Richard B. Russell,  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services  
U. S. Senate

My Dear Mr. Chairman:

There is transmitted herewith an interim report by the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, appointed under Senate Resolution 75 of the 88th Congress, on the Cuban Military Buildup.

In its inquiry to this time the Subcommittee has received testimony in executive session from the Director of Central Intelligence, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force intelligence sections. The interim report transmitted herewith is addressed primarily to a review of military developments and intelligence activities and operations in connection with Cuba from early 1962 to the present insofar as the facts have been developed and are now known to the Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee intends to pursue further its inquiry into the Cuban situation and it is anticipated that one or more subsequent reports on this subject will be issued in the future.

It is necessary that this interim report to the full Committee on Armed Services be classified "Secret." However, the Subcommittee is submitting the report for review for security purposes and will have the report printed and released to the public when it has been so reviewed and the necessary security matters have been deleted.

Respectfully,

JOHN STENNIS,  
Chairman, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee.

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INTERIM REPORT ON CUBAN MILITARY BUILDUP

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The dramatic events which occurred last October with respect to Cuba are now history. Following photographic confirmation of the fact that strategic and offensive weapons had, in fact, been introduced into Cuba and President Kennedy's confrontation with Premier Khrushchev, such strategic and offensive weapons were ostensibly withdrawn.

However, the public concern and debate about the Cuban situation has not subsided. There have been and are insistent reports that the Soviets still maintain strategic missiles in Cuba which are concealed in caves and other underground facilities and that Soviet troops are based in the island in numbers far in excess of those accepted by our intelligence community. Reports also abound with respect to the use of Cuba as a base for subversive, agitational and revolutionary activities directed at other Latin American countries.

The prevalence of these reports and allegations prompted the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee to launch an investigation into the entire subject matter in an effort to determine the facts. Although the investigation still continues, the Subcommittee deems it appropriate to issue an interim report at this time. This report will be limited to a review of military developments and intelligence activities and operations in connection with Cuba from early 1962 to the current time insofar as the facts are now known to us. A discussion of the use of Cuba as a base for subversive activities will be included in a subsequent report.

Broadly speaking, the term "intelligence community" includes the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the intelligence sections of the Army, Navy and Air Force, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Department of State, the National Security Agency, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the

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Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is used in this report, however, in a somewhat more limited sense. Where the term appears in this report it primarily refers to and includes the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the intelligence sections of the Army, Navy and Air Force. Other agencies are, of course, impliedly included in our use of the term to the extent that they participated in or contributed to any of the activities or operations discussed.

Up to this time, the Subcommittee has received testimony in executive hearings from Mr. John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence; Lt. Gen. Joseph F. Carroll, Director of Defense Intelligence Agency; Major General Alva R. Fitch, Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U. S. Army; Rear Admiral Vernon L. Lowrance, Director of Naval Intelligence; and Major General Robert A. Breitweiser, Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U. S. Air Force.

The Subcommittee has also received and has on file a number of written reports from the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We have also considered reports issued by the Special Consultative Committee on Security of the Council of the Organization of American States and the Cuban Revolutionary Council.

In addition, the Subcommittee staff has made an extensive investigation and has thus far interviewed more than 70 witnesses who do not hold official positions, including many Cuban refugees and exiles. Staff investigators spent approximately 45 man days in the Miami area alone.

Information has also been received from individual Senators and Members of the House of Representatives.

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This interim report is based primarily on the testimony received from the intelligence chiefs who appeared before the Subcommittee. It does, however, include some information from other sources.

Since our inquiry is not yet completed, this report does not contain any overall or comprehensive conclusions and recommendations. Major findings, based on the testimony and evidence thus far received, relative to intelligence activities during the military buildup have been incorporated. Our general recommendation at this time is that an alert vigilance be maintained over all activities taking place in Cuba.

## II. SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

1. While hindsight shows that the performance of the Central Intelligence Agency and the military intelligence agencies can be criticized in some areas, in other areas they performed creditably. Offensive weapons systems were identified before becoming operational and their locations and performance characteristics spelled out in a limited period of time despite adverse weather and an almost completely closed society.

2. Although photographic reconnaissance has limitations, it was this capability which ultimately produced incontrovertible proof of the presence of strategic missiles and offensive weapons in Cuba. Credit is due to those involved in this mission.

3. While a reasonably competent job was done in acquiring and collecting intelligence information and data, in retrospect it appears that several substantial errors were made by the intelligence agencies in the evaluation of the information and data which was accumulated.

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4. Faulty evaluation and the predisposition of the intelligence community to the philosophical conviction that it would be incompatible with Soviet policy to introduce strategic missiles into Cuba resulted in intelligence judgments and evaluations which later proved to be erroneous. Among these were:

(a) It was not until after a confirming picture was obtained on October 25th, 1962, that it was established by the intelligence community that organized Soviet ground combat units were present in Cuba. The importance of this should be obvious.

(b) The number of Soviet troops in Cuba was substantially underestimated throughout the crisis. On October 22nd, our intelligence people estimated that there were 8,000 to 10,000 Soviets in Cuba. They now say that, at the height of the buildup, there were at least 22,000 Soviet personnel on the island.

(c) It was not until the photographic evidence was obtained on October 14th that the intelligence community concluded that strategic missiles had been introduced into Cuba. In reaching their pre-October 14th negative judgment the intelligence analysts were strongly influenced by their judgment as to Soviet policy and indications that strategic missiles were being installed were not given proper weight by the intelligence community. A contributing factor to this was the tendency on the part of the intelligence people to discredit and downgrade the reports of Cuban refugees and exiles.

5. The Subcommittee has uncovered no evidence to substantiate charges and speculation about a photography "gap" having existed from September 5th to



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October 14th. The evidence before the Subcommittee leads to the conclusion that such charges are unfounded.

6. The news reports of an alleged conflict between the Central Intelligence Agency and Strategic Air Command with reference to the operation of U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance flights prior to October 14th were also closely inquired into and found to be without merit. No evidence was presented to support the charge that the operation of the U-2 flights were transferred from the Central Intelligence Agency to Strategic Air Command because of a deadlock or friction between the agencies.

7. To a man the intelligence chiefs stated that it is their opinion that all strategic missiles and bombers have been removed from Cuba. However, they readily admit that, in terms of absolutes, it is quite possible that offensive weapons remain on the island concealed in caves or otherwise. They also admitted that absolute assurance on this question can come only from penetrating and continuing on-site inspection by reliable observers and that, based on skepticism, if nothing more, there is reason for grave concern about the matter.

8. There are literally thousands of caves and underground caverns in the Island of Cuba and many of these are suitable for the storage and concealment of strategic missiles and other offensive weapons. Refugee and exile reports continue to insist that they are being so utilized. Military-connected activities have been noted with reference to a number of them but it is the view of the intelligence analysts that the military usage of the caves is for the storage of those weapons which we know are now in Cuba and not for the storage of offensive weapon systems. Admittedly, however, this view is based to a substantial degree on the negative proposition that there is no hard evidence

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confirming the presence of strategic missiles in Cuba at this time.

9. Even though the intelligence community believes that all have been withdrawn, it is of the greatest urgency to determine whether or not strategic missiles are now concealed in Cuba. The criticality of this is illustrated by the fact that, assuming maximum readiness at pre-selected sites, with all equipment pre-located, the Soviet mobile medium range (1100 miles) missiles could be made operational in a matter of hours.

10. The intelligence community estimated that approximately 5000 Soviet personnel were withdrawn from Cuba following the October confrontation, leaving, according to intelligence sources, about 17,500 Soviets in Cuba. A net of 4000 to 5000 additional have been withdrawn since the first of the year, our intelligence people say. However, because of what is described by intelligence as "technical reasons," the 17,500 intelligence estimate of those remaining is unchanged at the writing of this report. At the least, this indicates to the Subcommittee that there is a low level of confidence in the original estimate. There is also some doubt in our minds as to the adequacy of the information as to the number of Soviets newly arriving. All of the intelligence people agree that there is no evidence that any of the combat ground troops associated with the four mobile armored groups have been withdrawn.

11. Some other sources --primarily refugee and exile groups-- estimate that as many as 40,000 Soviets are now in Cuba. Bearing in mind the lack of hard evidence on the question and the substantial underestimation of last Fall, we conclude that no one in official United States circles can tell, with any real degree of confidence, how many Russians are now in Cuba and we are of the opinion that the official 17,500 estimate is perhaps a minimum figure.

12. In any event, it is conceded that the combined Soviet and Cuban forces now in the island are quite powerful defensively and could offer severe opposition to any attack. They are admittedly capable of suppressing any

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internal rebellion or revolt mounted without external support, and it is clear that an invasion from without, to have a fair chance of success, would require large forces, extensive sea-borne landing efforts, and adequate air cover.

13. Based upon their judgment that all strategic missiles and offensive weapons have been removed, the intelligence chiefs do not believe that the Communist forces in Cuba now present a direct aggressive military threat to the United States or Latin America. Strategic weapons may or may not be now in Cuba. We can reach no conclusion on this because of the lack of conclusive evidence.

14. The evidence is overwhelming that Castro is supporting, spurring, aiding and abetting Communist revolutionary and subversive movements throughout the Western Hemisphere and that such activities present a grave and ominous threat to the peace and security of the Americas.

### III. SITUATION PRIOR TO MID-JULY, 1962

#### A. Cuban Forces

It was estimated by intelligence sources that at the beginning of 1962, the Cuban ground forces consisted of a standing army of 75,000, a ready reserve of 100,000, and a home guard of 100,000. Although the ground combat capability of the Cuban forces had increased since the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion, it was thought that, although the Cuban forces were of varying states of training, they had the capability for effective ground operations at the battalion combat team level. They were not thought to be organized for operations with units larger than reinforced battalions and it was believed that they were maintained primarily for the purpose of internal security operations and to repel any attempted invasion. The intelligence community thought that approximately 500

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Soviet bloc advisory personnel were then in Cuba.

By the beginning of 1962, the Cuban Air Force had benefitted by the acquisition of MIG aircraft and the return of a number of people trained in bloc countries. It had some 40 MIG 15's, 17's and 19's as well as about 40 propeller-driven aircraft of training, transport and utility types.

The Cuban Navy was small and of an essentially coastal patrol type. Several of these craft in the sub-chaser and motor torpedo boat types had been received from the Soviets. The crews on a number of these craft were mixed Cuban and Soviet, indicating that the Cubans were still under training.

It was agreed by intelligence sources, however, that even prior to July, 1962, vast amounts of Soviet military equipment had been introduced into Cuba for the use of the Cuban forces. As a result, it was believed that even then the Cuban Army was one of the best equipped in all Latin America. The arms and equipment furnished the Cubans at this time consisted of a mixture of World War II equipment and more modern weapons. There is a question as to whether the amount of heavy and more complicated weapons introduced into Cuba at this time was not more than ample to supply the needs of the Cuban forces as then constituted.

#### B. Intelligence Activities and Operations

The intelligence activities with respect to Cuba prior to July, 1962, consisted of reconnaissance overflights by U-2 aircraft, peripheral reconnaissance flights over international waters and the collection of reports from refugees, exiles, and other human sources.

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For sometime prior to 1962, U-2 aircraft operated by the Central Intelligence Agency had been flying at high altitudes over the Island of Cuba itself for reconnaissance purposes. Commencing in early 1962, the frequency of the flights was increased.

Also, even before 1962, regular reconnaissance and photographic flights were flown by the military on a regular basis over international waters but not over the Island of Cuba itself.

In addition, during the same period, thousands of human source reports were collected and assessed. Included in these reports were many which contained allegations of missile-related activities and of the presence of Soviet ground combat units in Cuba. However, although the reports were checked to the greatest extent possible, the intelligence community obtained no confirmation of such activities.

In recognition of the increasing importance of the Cuban problem, the intelligence community in early 1962 intensified their intelligence activities and stated a greater urgency in their collection requirements with respect to Cuba. The flights over Cuba were increased. The intelligence community was alert to the implications of the communization of Cuba. However, on the basis of the information collected and the assessment of this information, the intelligence conclusion at this time was that the activities were primarily defensive. No Soviet combat units or strategic weapons were discovered.

The intelligence community, although agreeing that the activities in Cuba were then primarily directed towards defense, did conclude in early 1962 that it might probably be expected that the IL-28 (Beagle) light bomber would be supplied to Cuba by the Soviets in the future.

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#### IV. SITUATION FROM MID-JULY TO OCTOBER 22, 1962

##### A. Buildup in Soviet Forces and Equipment

In late July and early August, our intelligence noted a significant change in the situation in Cuba. A sudden rise in military aid from the Soviet Union became clearly evident. Ship arrivals, both dry cargo and passenger, increased drastically. For example, for the first half of 1962, an average of 15 Soviet dry cargo ships per month arrived in Cuba. The number jumped to 37 in August. Only one Soviet passenger ship had arrived in Cuba during the first five months of 1962. Four arrived in July and six in August.

While our intelligence people were aware from this and other information that a major Soviet effort in Cuba was under way, its exact nature and impact was not clear to the intelligence community.

During the July-August period, refugee reports of alleged missile activity in Cuba increased significantly. These reports were checked out as scrupulously as possible, but even though many of them included consistent and similar descriptions of some form of missile activity, there was no confirmation of them.

At the same time, there were human source reports that some of the ships were unloaded at night under rigid security with all non-Soviet personnel being excluded from the dock areas. The practice of unloading at night in small easily guarded ports, remote from large population centers, was known to the intelligence community, although the alleged security conditions ashore could not be confirmed.

Human source reports also alleged that the nature and character of the arriving Soviet personnel had changed significantly. It was reported that some of the arriving personnel during this period were primarily young, trim,

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physically fit, sun-tanned and disciplined, and that they formed in ranks of fours on the docks and moved out in truck convoys. Refugee, exile, and other human source reports suggested that, in contrast to the earlier arrivals, the new arrivals were Soviet combat troops. However, the intelligence community adhered to the view that they were military instructors, advisors, and trainers, plus a number of civilian technicians and advisors associated with improving the Cuban economy. The view was that they did not include significant numbers of Soviet military personnel and that they were not organized into combat units. As late as October 29, in an unclassified information brochure published by the Defense Department entitled "Cuba," the Soviet "personnel" in the island were estimated at 5,000.

B. Identification of Specific Weapons and Equipment

1. SA-2 Sites - About August 15, as a result of suspicions generated by human source reports, the Department of Defense focused special attention on suspected areas and requested that they be covered by the "next" high altitude flight. As a result, the next such flight, flown on August 29, established positive identification of SA-2 surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites at two of the suspect locations and at six others in Western Cuba. Flights from August 29 through October 7 discovered additional SA-2 sites. The SA-2 system can engage targets at altitudes up to 80,000 feet and has a slant range of about 25 miles.

2. Cruise Missiles - A coastal defense cruise missile installation was identified shortly after the flight of August 29. Three additional cruise missile sites were discovered by October 7. These are anti-shipping missiles estimated to have a maximum range of about 40 miles. On August 29 KOMAR class patrol boats with 2 missile launchers each were identified in Cuba.

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3. MIG-21 Fighters - Although the Soviets had supplied the Cuban Air Force with MIG-15, 17, and 19 aircraft prior to the Spring of 1962, the presence of the modern supersonic MIG-21 fighter was first confirmed by a picture obtained on September 5, 1962.

4. IL-28 (Beagle) Bombers - As early as the Spring of 1962, the intelligence community was of the view that the Soviets might send the IL-28 (Beagle) light bomber into Cuba. This apprehension was confirmed by a picture taken on September 28 which was later evaluated as showing crates containing IL-28's aboard a Cuba-bound ship. This evaluation was not made until October 9 and was disseminated to the intelligence community on October 10.

5. Medium Range and Intermediate Range Missiles - As has already been indicated, during all of this period there was a great volume of unconfirmed reports and rumors from human sources about strategic missile-related activity in Cuba. None of these reports were confirmed prior to October 14, 1962. It is evident that many of these reports in fact referred to the SA-2 missile, which, although nowhere near the size of the strategic missiles later identified, still appears large to the untrained observer.

However, after mid-September some reports of missiles being introduced into Cuba were suggestive enough of strategic or offensive weapons to arouse the suspicions of intelligence analysts. This resulted in the conclusion--apparently reached near the end of September, 1962--that there was a suspect medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) site in Pinar del Rio Province. As a result, photographic coverage of the suspect area was proposed and on October 14 a Strategic Air Command U-2 reconnaissance aircraft overflew the area and emerged with hard photographic evidence of the San Cristobal medium-range ballistic missile complex.



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Photographic reconnaissance was unable to detect precisely how many ballistic missiles were introduced into Cuba. Prior to the Soviet announcement that 42 missiles would be withdrawn, our photographs had revealed a lesser number. It could not be established, therefore, how many ballistic missiles were, in fact, introduced into Cuba or specifically how many the Soviets planned to introduce.

Additional medium-range ballistic missile sites and intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) sites were located by high altitude reconnaissance missions flown after October 14. Six MRBM sites were located, all of which had achieved a full operational capacity on October 28 when the dismantling of the sites commenced. Three IRBM sites were located and it was anticipated that a fourth would be established. None of the IRBM sites became operational before being dismantled, it being the estimate that they would have become operational by December 15.

The medium-range missile is estimated to have a range of about 1100 miles and the intermediate range missile is credited with a range of 2200 miles.

C. Failure to Identify Soviet Organized Ground Combat Units

As has already been noted, notwithstanding some reports that many of the Soviets arriving in Cuba after mid-July were military units, and notwithstanding the evidence of a drastically increased buildup in modern and sophisticated ground weapons, the intelligence community did not identify the presence of Russian organized ground combat forces in Cuba until October 25 when new pictures obtained by low-level photography, coupled with a re-analysis of previous photography, led to the conclusion that there were, in fact, four organized, mobile, and powerful armored Soviet units in Cuba.

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The aggregate strength of these units is now estimated by intelligence people to be about 5,000 men.

In addition, it is agreed that the number of Soviet personnel in Cuba was substantially underestimated by our intelligence. For example, on October 22, 1962, the date that the President addressed the nation, the intelligence community estimated the Soviet personnel in Cuba to be 8,000 to 10,000. The current intelligence evaluation is that at the height of the Soviet buildup, there were in Cuba an aggregate of at least 22,000 Soviet troops. This is, of course, a retroactive or reconstructed intelligence estimate. One factor in the underestimation of the number of Soviet personnel in Cuba in October was the assumption that the arriving passenger ships were normally loaded. It is obvious now that these ships were, in fact, troop loaded and that the actual aggregate troop-carrying capacity of the arriving passenger ships was in excess of 20,000. In addition, it is believed that the additional Soviet military personnel arrived in cargo ships. There is some reason to doubt that even the 22,000 figure would account fully for all of the great quantities of weapons and equipment introduced into Cuba since June, 1962.

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Equally important, since on October 22nd the President did not know of the presence in Cuba of a substantial number of Soviet soldiers in heavily armed organized ground combat units, he could not include this factor in his actions vis-a-vis the Soviets and demand at that time their withdrawal from the Western Hemisphere along with the strategic missiles.

D. Alleged Photographic Gap

There has been considerable public discussion about an alleged gap in our photographic reconnaissance over Cuba during the period from September 5 to October 14. We have examined this question as thoroughly as possible and have found the allegations with respect to it to be unfounded. The record of the flights which were scheduled between August 29 and October 14 should be sufficient to clear up the situation and these will be summarized here.

The flight of August 29, which has already been discussed, resulted in the discovery of surface-to-air missile and cruise missile sites.

On September 5, a mission was flown which covered the central and eastern portion of the island. Good coverage was obtained of the central portion but weather conditions prevented any photographic returns with reference to the eastern end of the island.

A flight was planned for September 10th but this was not flown.

On September 17, a mission was flown but, because of weather conditions, it was not wholly successful.

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Adverse weather precluded further flights until September 26th. Flights were flown on September 26, September 29, October 5 and October 7. These flights completed the coverage of those areas of Cuba which had been spotlighted as requiring early attention.

Weather prevented any additional flights until October 14. On October 12, the Strategic Air Command was given responsibility for operating the U-2 high altitude reconnaissance missions over Cuba, and on October 14, it flew the flight which gave the first hard evidence of the existence of strategic missiles in Cuba.

E. Transfer of U-2 Flights from CIA to SAC

There have been numerous news reports alleging the existence of a conflict between the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Strategic Air Command (SAC) with reference to the operation of the U-2 high altitude flights. These reports have contained allegations that a deadlock existed between CIA and SAC and that this was resolved at the policy level by transferring the function of flying the U-2 missions from CIA to SAC. It has also been alleged that this is one of the reasons for the delay in locating the MRBM sites in Cuba.

These allegations have also been closely inquired into and have been found to be without merit. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that any conflict between CIA and SAC existed or that there was any delay in photographic coverage of the island because of the fact that the U-2 program was being operated by CIA prior to October 14.

Likewise, there is no evidence whatsoever of any deadlock between the two agencies or any conflict or dispute with respect to the question of by whom the flights should be flown.

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The Subcommittee inquired thoroughly into the reason for the transfer of the U-2 operation from CIA to SAC. It is to be remembered that the SA-2 sites in the San Cristobal area had been located on August 29th. The U-2 flight which was flown on October 14th was programed to over-fly this area. In view of the possibility that the flight might provoke hostile reactions from the SA-2's, it was concluded that it would be more appropriate for the operation to be conducted by the military rather than by civilians. This decision was entirely reasonable and proper.

It is a fact, of course, that the first U-2 flight flown by SAC was the one which resulted in obtaining a photograph of the MRBM site. This, without explanation, originally gave the Subcommittee some concern. However, after inquiring closely into the situation we are convinced that there is no significance to it and that it was just a matter of timing and coincidence.

F. Intelligence Activities and Operations Generally

As has been indicated, the U-2 high altitude reconnaissance flights over Cuba continued at the rate of two a month, weather permitting, until September. The stepped-up schedule for September and early October has already been outlined. All of the U-2 flights prior to October 14th were flown by the CIA.

After the mission which verified the existence of MRBMs in Cuba, there was a concentrated effort to determine the precise nature of the missile buildup and the exact location, number, configuration and state of readiness of the missile systems. Between October 14 and October 22, the Strategic Air Command flew a total of 17 high altitude sorties. Low altitude overflights were not initiated until October 23, the day following the President's message.

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During the same period, the peripheral reconnaissance flights over international waters continued, as did the intensified collection efforts using refugees, exiles, and other human sources.

In reviewing the intelligence activities with respect to Cuba, the Subcommittee found areas in which criticism is justly due. In other areas, however, our intelligence did quite well. The MRBMs were discovered while they were in the process of being deployed. The IRBM sites were discovered in a very early stage of construction. The IL-28 bombers were discovered while they were still in their crates. The MIG-21's were discovered when only one had been removed from the shipping container. All these weapon systems were identified, and their locations and performance characteristics spelled out before they became operational in a very compressed and limited period of time despite adverse weather conditions and the fact that we were penetrating an almost completely closed society.

The SA-2 sites were discovered commencing August 29th, and were credited by the intelligence community with becoming operational on a site-by-site basis commencing in mid-September. It is certain that these air defense missiles had attained an operational capability by October 27th. On that date a U-2 plane piloted by Major Rudolph Anderson, USAF, was shot down by an SA-2 and Major Anderson was killed.

CIA and military intelligence, by use of their highly developed photographic capability, were able to give a unique performance in intelligence operations. They ultimately placed in the hands of the President, his advisors and United States diplomatic representatives incontrovertible proof of the presence of Soviet strategic missiles in Cuba in direct contravention of Soviet government assurances. This visual proof unquestionably played a major part in the united action of the Organization of American States and world acceptance of the correctness of our position.

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Photographic reconnaissance, however, does have limitations. It is only a part of the total intelligence collection means, although a most important one. It did not reveal the presence of ballistic missiles in Cuba during the period of at least a month between their introduction into the Island and their deployment on sites. The absence of photographic confirmation of human source and other reports, therefore, does not of itself disprove the accuracy of the other sources.

The responsible agencies of the intelligence community appear to have done a creditable job in gathering and collecting quantities of data and information. The deficiency in the performance of the intelligence community appears to have been in the evaluation and assessment of the accumulated data. Moreover there seems to have been a disinclination on the part of the intelligence community to accept and believe the ominous portent of the information which had been gathered.

In addition, the intelligence people apparently invariably adopted the most optimistic estimate possible with respect to the information available. This is in sharp contrast to the customary military practice of emphasizing the worst situation which might be established by the accumulation of evidence.

There also appeared to be a tendency on the part of the intelligence people to discredit and downgrade refugee and exile reports. This was based on the general lack of experience and training of the refugees and exiles as military observers, their frequent inclusion of items not reasonably credible among those things which were within their power of observation as to time, place and comprehension, and on the consideration of the obvious self-interest of the Cuban sources.

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Finally, the intelligence community was of the opinion that the Soviets would not introduce strategic missiles into Cuba because they believed that such a development would be incompatible with Soviet policy as interpreted by them. The error inherent in this estimate was clearly demonstrated by subsequent events. The danger that such pre-conceptions will control the weighing of the facts as events unfold is evident.

The influence of these and other factors resulted in several intelligence judgments and estimates which, in the retrospect, proved to be erroneous. A few of these will be mentioned.

The fact that the intelligence community did not accept the fact that organized Soviet ground combat units were being introduced into Cuba until photographic confirmation of this fact was obtained on October 25, and the related fact that the number of Soviets in Cuba was substantially underestimated throughout the entire crisis have already been discussed.

It has also been noted that the intelligence community did not estimate that strategic missiles would be introduced into Cuba until photographic confirmation was obtained on October 14th. It appears that, on this point, the analysts were strongly influenced by their philosophical judgment that it would be contrary to Soviet policy to introduce strategic missiles into Cuba. In retrospect, it appears that the indicators to the contrary were not given proper weight. Among other things the discovery of the surface-to-air missile complex in the San Cristobal area on August 29th could logically have led to the assumption that they were being constructed to protect a strategic missile installation since it was clear that these SA-2's were not being emplaced for the purpose of protecting any existing or known military installation.



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V. SITUATION FROM OCTOBER 22, 1962, TO TIME OF REMOVAL OF IL-28 BOMBERS

A. Intelligence Activities and Operations Generally

On the day following the President's statement, that is, on October 23, 1962, low altitude flights over Cuba were commenced and there was a concerted effort to obtain detailed information both about the entire island and selected targets.

During the period from October 22 to December 6 the Strategic Air Command flew a total of 82 high altitude sorties, and from October 23 through November 15, when the low level flights over the island were discontinued, the Air Force and Navy flew a total of 162 low altitude sorties.

B. Identification of Organized Soviet Ground Combat Units

As has already been mentioned, photographs obtained on October 25th provided the first confirmation of the presence of Soviet highly mobile armored task groups in Cuba. The information obtained as a result was first distributed to the operational military commands on October 30th. Up to that time, it was thought that the Soviet ground equipment arriving in Cuba was to be utilized by the Cuban forces.

C. Removal of Missiles and IL-28 Bombers

To a man the intelligence chiefs believe that, following the October crisis and quarantine, the Soviets removed from Cuba 42 medium range ballistic missiles and related equipment, intermediate range ballistic missile equipment, and 42 IL-28 jet light bombers.

A comprehensive and concentrated aerial reconnaissance and fleet observation program endeavored to cover every aspect of the exodus of this equipment. This program involved high and low altitude flights over Cuba, accompanied by intensive sea and aerial surveillance of the departing ships over Cuba and Caribbean waters and continued surveillance across the Atlantic.

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The effort was directed at covering the dismantling and abandonment of the missile sites, at covering the roads and highways leading from the sites to the ports, and at covering the port areas to observe the material as it arrived, was assembled on the docks and loaded aboard ships.

As stated, the intelligence community believes that all strategic missiles and bombers which were in Cuba at the time of the quarantine were removed by the USSR. However, they acknowledge the existence of continuing reports to the contrary and freely concede that, in terms of absolutes, it is possible that despite our surveillance program, we were misled and deceived.

#### VI. CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION IN CUBA

##### A. Intelligence Activities and Operations Generally

Since the withdrawal of the strategic missiles and the IL-28 bombers the intelligence community has turned its primary attention to surveillance of the situation as it now exists. High level U-2 photographic flights continue on a regular basis. Since the U-2 was shot down on October 27 there has been no further attempt to interfere with our aerial reconnaissance. The reason for this one incident amidst a pattern of acquiescence in the overflights remains a matter for speculation.

The collection efforts using the technical and the various human sources available, such as refugees, exiles, and others is a continuing process. The close surveillance of merchant shipping arriving departing Cuba, by naval air and surface ships continues, as does the peripheral surveillance by reconnaissance and photographic aircraft.

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A particular focus of attention has been the prospect that Cuba might become a base for Soviet submarine operations. There have been repeated rumors and speculations that such is already the case. Much of this is related to the Soviet assistance to Cuba in improving and expanding certain commercial fishing facilities. The intelligence community, however, does not believe that in fact Cuba is now, or has been, a base for Soviet submarines.

Admittedly, however, no spectacular operation is necessary to provide temporary advance base type support to submarines, sufficient to greatly extend their time on station away from bloc nation ports, and to facilitate their operations generally. Reasonably sheltered anchorages or ports with sufficient depth, ready supplies of diesel fuel, fresh water, food supplies, and relaxation facilities ashore for the crews greatly extend the time away from home for any submarine. The presence of a few skilled technicians and a supply of the high usage repair parts would additionally extend operational periods considerably. The use of shore-based long range communication systems and information from surface and shore-based radio and radar nets would greatly facilitate Soviet submarine operations in the Caribbean as well as assist in attempt to evade detection.

B. Nature and Capabilities of Forces and Equipment Now in Cuba

1. Types and Numbers of Weapons - As previously mentioned, it was testified that the native Cuban forces are organized only at reinforced battalion level with the effective modern weapons for such units, including rifles, machine guns, light and heavy mortars and considerable field artillery. For an organization of that type they have a rather large amount of mechanized equipment, tanks, self-propelled artillery and armored personnel carriers.

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They also have available a considerable amount of anti-tank guns and light antiaircraft guns suitable for use against low flying aircraft. How much of the large numbers of additional crew-operated weapons of the types mentioned above are now in Cuban hands is apparently not known or estimated.

The Soviet organization has a powerful modern array of weapons in plentiful numbers. There are 24 SA-2 sites of 6 launchers each, in a tight knit perimeter air defense of the entire Island of Cuba. These weapons are similar to our NIKE-HERCULES and are very good indeed. Their fire control system is also estimated as of a high order of effectiveness. They have brought in a large amount of ammunition for these units. The SA-2 system which is quite complex is manned by Soviet troops. It would take over a year of intensive training, including quite technical schooling, for the native Cuban troops to replace the Soviets in the SA-2 system. Probably associated with the SA-2 sites for low level air defense, as well as in local defense of other important sites, are some of the large additional numbers of light antiaircraft guns brought in by the Soviet Expeditionary Force. Whether any or all of these weapons are manned by Soviets is apparently not known.

There are four cruise missile sites, with missiles of a range of about 30 to 40 miles from their ground launchers. The missiles are placed as part of the coastal defense system of Cuba, which is the normal Soviet employment of these weapons. They are manned by Soviet naval crews. As an added feature of these missiles, there are at least one hundred fifty (150) of them in Cuba, far more than could be logically associated with the known missile launching sites. It may be speculated that the launchers for these missiles may have been in some of the bloc shipping turned back by the October Quarantine and thus failed to reach Cuba.

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The Soviet naval contingent in Cuba also operates 12 KOMAR-type high-speed patrol craft as part of the Cuban coastal defenses. These boats are each equipped with a pair of cruise-type missiles. The missiles are estimated to have a range of 10 to 15 miles. These boats are under Soviet control, but Cubans are believed to have been observed aboard them. The KOMARS are apparently the only Soviet naval craft introduced into Cuba as part of their expedition.

The Soviet Army element of the Soviet expedition in Cuba is armed with almost all of the weapons found in large Soviet troop formations. Many of these weapons, of the type characteristic of elements of mechanized and motorized divisions, reinforced by artillery and other units, are known to be in surprisingly large numbers. As mentioned before, the amounts, if any, handed to the Cubans from the many hundreds of heavy weapons brought in by the ships of the Soviet expedition, are not fully known. These weapons include very large and substantial numbers of heavy tanks and medium tanks; self-propelled assault guns; 57 mm anti-tank guns; light, medium and heavy mortars; field artillery pieces; antiaircraft guns, both 30 mm and 57 mm; armored personnel carriers; a number of the truck-mounted multiple launchers for the 130 mm rocket; and quantities of various types of motor vehicles, radio equipment and engineer equipment. We feel that the official estimates of the number of Soviet troops are questionably low when related to the large numbers of the weapons listed above.

To the above must be added two very modern Soviet Army tactical missiles. The first is the SNAPPER, a wire guided anti-tank missile similar to our SS-10 and SS-11. The second is the FROG, a rocket with a range of about 25 miles, which can be equipped with a nuclear warhead. It is similar to our HONEST JOHN.

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According to our intelligence, the Soviet Air Force in Cuba has approximately 42 MIG-21's, one of their most modern high performance supersonic jet fighters. They are probably equipped with air to air missiles. Associated with them is a net of radars and radios necessary for their control and the integration of the entire air defense system, SA-2 and fighter.

## 2. Strength and Capabilities of Forces

It was testified that the strength of the Cuban army apparently remains at the same level as before the crisis, that is, 75,000 in the regular Army, 10,000 in the Militia, and 100,000 in the form of a home guard.

At this point it must be said that there is no really hard evidence of the number of Soviets who are now in Cuba. While 17,500 is still the official estimate of our intelligence people, despite the reported withdrawal of some 4,000 to 5,000 since the first of the year, the level of confidence in its accuracy varies even within the intelligence community. Other sources present considerably higher estimates -- some ranging up to 40,000 and more. Bearing in mind the substantial underestimation of last October, we can only conclude that no one -- outside of Soviet and Cuban official circles -- knows how many Russian troops are now there. The 17,500 estimate is perhaps a minimum figure.

In any event, it is believed that the Soviet expedition, combined with the Cuban forces, as an entity, is quite powerful in a defensive sense. The air defense system is believed to be of a high order of effectiveness.

The coastal defense cruise missiles do not form a tight perimeter defense

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of the Cuban shoreline, evidently because the quarantine turned back the necessary launchers to complete an interlocking net similar to the SA-2 system. This gap in the island defense may be partially covered by the KOMAR missile craft. The Soviet Army units, trained in mobile aggressive armored warfare, if well coordinated with the static defense ability of the Cuban native forces, could offer severe opposition to any attack. This opposition would be sufficient to make it necessary to mount a large sea-borne landing effort along with any desired air-borne effort in order to be sure of success.

Based upon their judgment that all strategic missiles and offensive weapon systems have been removed, the intelligence community does not believe that Cuba now presents any major direct military threat to the United States or latin America in an offensive or aggressive sense. Strategic weapons may

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or may not be now in Cuba. We can reach no conclusion on this because of lack of conclusive evidence.

It is clear, however, that as a source of weapons and small bands of provocateurs, saboteurs, agents of revolution and chaos it is a distinct and present threat to all of the Latin American nations with shores on the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea. It might be relatively difficult to engage in the smuggling of tanks, self-propelled guns, and heavy truck-towed artillery. Light mortars, machine guns, rifles, and the ammunition for these weapons, grenades, explosives, radios and bribe money are an entirely different matter. Gun running is an ancient art in Central and South America, well-practiced and well-understood in many quarters. Modern facilities make Cuba, as a centrally located base for such Communist operations, a present and grave menace to the peace and security of the Western Hemisphere. The use of Cuba as a base for subversion will be discussed in more detail in a later report.

### 3. Reports of Concealed Strategic Weapons in Cuba

Reports from refugee, exile and other human sources insist that the strategic missiles and bombers were not removed from Cuba but are concealed in caves and otherwise. The intelligence community, although aware of these reports, have been unable to confirm them and adhere to the position that all strategic weapons are withdrawn.

It is fair to say, however, that this is a matter of great concern to the intelligence community. Based on skepticism, if nothing else, there is grave apprehension on this score. It is agreed that iron-clad assurance of the complete absence of Soviet strategic missiles in Cuba can come only as a result of thorough, penetrating on-site inspection by reliable observers. The



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current intelligence estimate that they are not present is based largely on the negative evidence that there is no affirmative proof to the contrary. This, of course, was precisely the status of the matter prior to last October 14.

There is no doubt that there are literally thousands of caves and caverns in Cuba and that it is feasible to use many of these for the storage and concealment of strategic missiles and other offensive weapons. It is also true that military activity has been observed in connection with these caves. Our intelligence people are of the opinion that some of the caves are in fact utilized for the storage of military items and equipment other than strategic missiles, such as ammunition, explosives, etc.

The importance of making every effort to ascertain the truth with respect to this matter cannot be over-emphasized. The criticality of it can best be illustrated by the fact that the testimony established that, upon the assumption that all missiles and associated equipment and the necessary personnel were readily available near pre-selected sites in a state of complete readiness, mobile medium range missiles could be made operational in a matter of hours. Thus, if these missiles and their associated equipment remain in Cuba, the danger is clear and obvious.

The possible installation of advance submarine bases in Cuba has already been discussed.

#### 4. Withdrawal of Soviet Personnel

Even though the intelligence community believes that a net 4000 to 5000 Soviet military personnel have been withdrawn from Cuba since the first of the year, because of what intelligence describes as "technical reasons" the previous intelligence estimate of approximately 17,500 Soviets in Cuba remains unchanged. At the very least this suggests to the Subcommittee that

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there is a low level of confidence in the original estimate. There is also some question in our minds as to the adequacy of the information as to the number of Soviets newly arriving. Admittedly, there could have been undetected arrivals at smaller ports, where it is known that cargo ships have repeated their prior practice of unloading at night under conditions of strict Soviet-imposed security. In any event, as the matter stands at the writing of this report, the intelligence community does not believe it yet has sufficient concrete evidence to estimate any reduction in overall Soviet military capability on the Island. There is no evidence that any of the combat troops associated with the four armored groups have been withdrawn.

C. Summary of Threat Arising from Soviet Presence in Cuba

Our summary of the threat and potential threat which the Soviet presence in Cuba presents to the Americas is as follows:

1. Cuba is an advanced Soviet base for subversive, revolutionary and agitational activities in the Western Hemisphere and affords the opportunity to export agents, funds, arms, ammunition and propaganda throughout Latin America.
2. Assuming without deciding that all strategic weapons have been withdrawn, there is the ever-present possibility of the stealthy re-introduction of strategic missiles and other offensive weapons, using the Soviet forces still in Cuba as camouflage and security for the activity.
3. Cuba serves as an advance intelligence base for the USSR.
4. The potential exists to establish electronic warfare capabilities based on Cuba.

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5. The vital Panama Canal could be the target for sneak raids originating from Cuba.

6. Potentially, Cuba is a base from which the Soviets could interdict our vital air and sea lanes. It can now be used for the air, sea, and electronic surveillance of our military activities in the Southeast United States and the Caribbean.

7. Cuba's airfields could serve as recovery air bases for planes launched against the United States from the Soviet Union.

8. Advanced Soviet submarine bases could be established in Cuban ports with very little effort.

9. The continued presence of the Soviets in Cuba could require a further reorientation of the U.S. air defenses.

10. Cuba provides a base for the training of agents from other Latin American countries in subversive, revolutionary, agitational and sabotage techniques.

11. The very presence of the Soviets in Cuba affects adversely our nation's image and prestige. Our friends abroad will understandably doubt our ability to meet and defeat the forces of communism thousands of miles across the ocean if we prove unable to cope with the communist threat at our very doorstep.

A consideration of all these matters serves to emphasize the gravity of the threat to our national security which Cuba now represents.

D. Prospect of Internal Revolt or Invasion

The continued presence of the Soviet expedition in Cuba can now be seen to be a most effective shield against either internal revolt by native insurgents, or invasion by external forces from any source. The ringing of the

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Island by the Soviet air defense and missile system, and the island-wide evidence of impressive, powerful, armored Russian troop units, all apparently immune from attack, has been and will be an increasing psychological damper to the fires of revolt. We can only expect, under present circumstances, that whatever capacity and will to resist communism may exist among the people in Cuba, will wither and shrink. The communization of the younger element creates simultaneously an increasingly militant communist nation.

The withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Cuba would remove a primary psychological prop of Castroism, and remove what is presently being used as a physical shield against any overt effort to keep alive the fires of freedom in Cuba. As mentioned before, the ability of Castro's native Cuban forces standing alone, to withstand any insurrection, depends upon the support the Cuban people give to the insurgents, and the effective outside help given to insurgent forces.

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## VII. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Barring some development which is unforeseen at this time, the public debate will probably continue as to whether missiles and other strategic weapons are now based in Cuba and as to the number of Soviet troops being maintained there. These things are certainly of undeniable importance. The matter of basic and fundamental importance, however, and the source of the real threat, is that international communism now has a firm foothold in this hemisphere and that, if we permit it to do so, it is here to stay.

The Soviets are in Cuba primarily for the purpose of increasing and spreading communism's influence and power in Latin America and we can be sure that they will exploit their foothold to the greatest extent possible. The paramount danger at this time is that the nations of this hemisphere may be subverted one by one and be exploited, in turn, for subversive and revolutionary activities. By this process of erosion our neighbors to the South may fall nation by nation until the entire hemisphere is lost and the Communist goal of isolating the United States has been attained.

Communism, of course, operates on a world-wide scale and its methods and techniques are always adapted to the environment in which it operates. With this in mind, the value to the USSR of the occupation of Cuba is apparent. The techniques of communist subversion may vary from simple infiltration to violent intervention. Whatever its form, however, in Cuba as elsewhere it is conceived, developed and perfected by the leaders of world communism for the purpose of furthering their concept of world domination. Its aim and goal is to destroy existing political, economic and social orders and to replace them with new and dictatorial regimes which presuppose the complete physical and moral control of subjugated peoples.

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This aim and goal has already been achieved in Cuba. It will be achieved elsewhere in Latin America unless positive steps are taken to prevent it. We must be prepared to take appropriate and positive action in our own national self-interest and in the interest of the collective security of the Western Hemisphere.

The Communist domination and occupation of Cuba, and the resulting menace to our security, requires and demands that the United States be ever alert and vigilant to all of its sinister implications. We must exercise the greatest surveillance and watchfulness possible, and use all available resources, for the purpose of ascertaining the true military situation in that unhappy island and to insure that we will not again be deceived and surprised. The entire Cuban problem, both military and political, should be accorded the highest possible priority by our governmental officials to the end that the evil threat which the Soviet occupation of Cuba represents will be eliminated at an early date.

9 May 63

cc:

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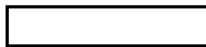
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